

**Court Improvement Program
C-PACS Committee Meeting
April 15, 2016
Draft Minutes**

Attendance:

Judge Griffith (chair), Barb Baxter, Tabettha Blevins, Traci Busch, Lisa Carmelia, Emily Chittenden-Laird (via phone), Pete Conley, Melinda Dugas, Monica Evans, Tanny O'Connell, Misty Prillaman, Nikki Tennis, and Cathy Wallace.

1. Review of Minutes

Judge Griffith called the meeting to order. After introductions, minutes from the meeting on January 14, 2016, were reviewed and approved.

2. Recap from the January 14, 2016 Meeting

The group discussed the need for more training in regards to co-petitioning.

- Judge Griffith and Barb Baxter are still trying to follow up with Judge Stone for the training committee.
- Catherine Munster and Joyce Yedlosky will be presenting on co-petitioning for an hour and a half at the Public Defenders' Conference in June.
- Nikki Tennis reported that the Chapter 49 clean-up passed in the legislature. The clean-up fixed statutes in regards to prosecutors cooperating with co-petitioners.

3. Review of CAN Database statistics and feedback

Monica Evans reported that only 8 battered parent adjudications had been recorded during 2015. Currently, there have been no battered parent adjudications reported in 2016 thus far. This decrease in reporting occurred after training the judicial secretaries on battered parent adjudications.

In 2015, there were 19 co-petitioners reported throughout the state. This data remains comparable to previous years. Monica Evans reported that the types of co-petitioners are remaining the same, with the largest portion of co-petitioners being fathers.

Risk factors continue to remain the same: 80% substance abuse, 43% domestic violence, and 11% mental health.

The 2015 data for the overlap report is almost finalized. The 2015 annual report is wrapping up, and there should not be much change in the data until it is finalized. The 2015 overlap data remains similar to 2014. Monica Evans reported that the 2016 overlap data is fluid and is currently underreported due to missing reports from some counties.

After the last C-PACS meeting, Tanny O'Connell contacted the counties in which co-petitioners had not been reported in over past 6 years. She presented the hand-out from the informal survey to the group. The committee found the information to be very beneficial. Two common issues highlighted by CPS in regards to co-petitioning are: the prosecutor's perception of co-petitioning and that there is no one appropriate to use as a co-petitioner. Tanny O'Connell suggested that, since the clean-up for Chapter 49 passed, Misty Prillaman could possibly get training out to the CPS workers, so they can begin conversing with prosecutors on co-petitioning.

Judge Griffith requested a report for the next meeting that shows a comparison of Family Court JAA reporting to Circuit Court JAA reporting and the discrepancies between the two courts.

4. Review of the 2016 committee work plan

The group discussed the framework for addressing the effects of substance abuse on children. Next meeting, the committee will discuss the possibility of creating a benchcard on child safety/risk and parental substance abuse, which could be added to the domestic violence benchbook, child custody benchbook, and the child abuse and neglect benchbook next year.

- Cathy Wallace discussed having trouble finding substance abuse treatment for juveniles in the state. Tanny O'Connell stated that DHHR is trying to focus on treating kids at home, in their communities. Cathy Wallace suggested it might be helpful to create a resource that identifies programs for juveniles with substance abuse issues.
- Judge Griffith suggested that the committee create a guide to resources for juveniles with substance abuse. This task has been added to the 2016 work plan. Misty Prillaman, Nikki Tennis, and Cathy Wallace will work on this task.

The committee discussed the duty to monitor and ensure implementation of overlapping issues. The committee will continue to encourage training on co-petitioning.

The group continued to discuss impending dangers and Safe at Home. Tanny O'Connell is not on the agenda to present at the next board meeting. Judge Griffith will ask the board to add this to the oversight board meeting this summer. Tanny O'Connell asked the committee to narrow down the scope of her

presentation. The committee discussed how the court sees drug abuse very differently than DHHR. The committee suggested for Tanny O'Connell to present on the disconnect with the court on how DHHR processes substance abuse issues.

The committee is continuing to work on the BCF background check process presentation after the board raised concerns and sent it back to the C-PACS committee. Melinda Dugas wanted to know what concerns were raised by the board. The group discussed the board's specific concerns. Melinda Dugas will lead the discussion for this topic at the next meeting.

5. Update on co-petitioning and battered parent- adjudication training and surveys

In Joyce Yedlosky's absence, this item has been moved to the next meeting.

6. Review discussion of impending dangers

At the last meeting, the group went through the principles of harm reduction word by word. The new draft was given out to the committee. The reason for these principles is so that communities across West Virginia can start looking at harm reduction. Tanny O'Connell stated she would need to run the principles of harm reduction by other people at DHHR. Judge Griffith asked the committee to be prepared to vote/approve the final form of the principles of harm reduction at the next meeting, so that it can be presented to the oversight board this summer.

In-house training for DHHR was discussed by the group. BCSE and CPS both have access to services that could benefit each other. For example, BCSE has a parent locator service that could be beneficial to a CPS worker that needs to find a parent. Barb Baxter mentioned the difficulty of getting BCSE and CPS to communicate. She said she set up an email system for all 55 counties, and only 2 counties use it. The committee recommended asking the cross-training committees from all 3 bureaus to meet to discuss how to improve in-house communication.

Misty Prillaman will make sure Chapter 44 regarding guardianship is in the policy for CPS workers. If not, she will add it to their list of policy change updates. Tanny O'Connell said they would review the policy and give a report at the next meeting.

Phase 2 of Safe at Home begins on July 1, 2016, which includes Mercer County. Tanny O'Connell explained that every child should have a wraparound facilitator that will help create the wrap plan for the child. A lot of the services are informal

support for the families. Judge Griffith emphasized on how this approach is finding non-traditional forms of help.

The committee discussed ideas on practical strategies of the harm reduction principles.

- a. NARCAN is now being used by first responders to reverse the effects of a drug overdose. NARCAN is available by prescription to family members of someone with a substance abuse problem. Marshall University also has classes on it.
- b. Senator Manchin is introducing “Jessie’s Law.” It would require getting someone’s medical history before prescribing narcotics.
- c. The group discussed the need for rehab facilities that allow children to be present. Parents need an environment where their children can be protected, and they can focus on their recovery.
- d. Judge Griffith discussed the issue of asking parents to go off drugs cold turkey instead of encouraging medically assisted substance abuse programs.

7. New/Old/Other business

The committee reviewed Article 8 of Chapter 49, the strengthening family’s act, HB4237 that passed in the legislature. The bill was pushed by Safe Families for Children, The Foundation for Government Accountability. The group discussed major concerns with individuals trying to avoid CPS through this bill and the possibility of a human trafficking issue. Judge Griffith stated that we already have a continuum of care for children starting with the Caregivers Consent Act. The committee agreed to refer HB4237 to the Data, Statutes, and Rules Committee.

8. Next Committee Meeting

The next C-PACS committee meeting will be **Friday June 17th, 2016**, from **1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** at the City Center East Building in Kanawha City, Room 222. Lunch will not be provided.